

Trapping as a Wildlife Management Tool in Interior Alaska



Xavier Lonewolf

Dept. of Alaska Native Studies & Rural Development

ABSTRACT

In the present day the Alaska Department of Fish and Game utilizes furbearer trapping as an important Wildlife Management tool. Historically, people have depended on furbearer trapping for required nutrients provided, by meat and also fur for clothing, bedding and shelter. But, modern day advances have impacted the trapping society and resulted in decline of participates. As time persists will the Alaska Dep. of Fish and Game have to replace the benefits that the trapping community provides us? It is important to see what simple solutions could possible restore the downfall. One simple outlook is to understand who all is participating and why. More importantly, are the future generations participating? Because the future holds the key.

INTRODUCTION

1. Is trapping currently viable as a wildlife management tool in Interior Alaska?

Furbearer trapping is the trapping of an mammal, that contains some magnitude of fur, by using foot hold traps or snares. Interior of Alaska targeted furbearer species, which are beaver, coyote, arctic fox, red fox, lynx, marten, mink & weasel, muskrat, river otter, squirrel & marmot, wolf, and wolverine. Furbearers are consider to be a renewable natural resource, only if it can be managed correctly. That is why ADFG has a furbearer management and established regulations for trapping. Furbearer management helps obtain the values of furbearer, such as economic, ecological, cultural, biological, and aesthetic values. Trapping is very important as a wildlife management tool in this region and is still needed for the future.

2. Is participation in trapping as part of local subsistence economy worthwhile?

Main influences for someone to trap are for personal enjoyment and the economic value. A few of us may be surprised, how lucrative fur trapping can be. Table 1.1 will show you average prices for raw fur during the trapping season of 2008-09. A few trappers turn the raw hide into arts & craft and clothing, to even further the economical value of trapping. One can still live off of fur trapping, only if time is put into it

3. Are youth, participating in this activity and what can be done to increase that involvement?

Fur trappers of Interior Alaska have steadily involved younger generations to attend them when checking trap lines. Over the years, the percentage of young generation aiding trappers has not shifted.

METHODS

- Research of regulations and harvest reports of Alaska Department of Fish and Game
- Interviews with Alaska Department of Fish and Game personnel
- Interviews with local trappers and fur dealers
- Attend the fur auction during North American dog sled races
- Interviews with youth involved in trapping



- Shadow local youth on their traplines



Picture of a foot hold lynx set buried under the snow



Snare Trap

RESULTS

- During the 2008-09 trapping season, 41% of trappers statewide reported to ADFG they took a young person trapping with them. (Lloyd & Rossi, 2010)

2008-09 Fur Value in Alaska			
Species	Total Number	Average Price Paid in Alaska	Total Estimated Value
Beaver	1,231	\$14.04	\$17,283.24
Coyote	200	\$25.34	\$5,068.00
Fox	1,499	\$15.58	\$23,354.42
Lynx	7,132	\$104.55	\$745,650.60
Marten	4,607	\$39.63	\$182,575.41
Mink	931	\$10.50	\$9,775.50
Muskrat	668	\$2.86	\$1,910.48
River Otter	933	\$30.57	\$28,521.81
Squirrel	377	\$1.20	\$452.40
Weasel	556	\$3.52	\$1,957.12
Wolf	1,295	\$123.77	\$160,282.15
Wolverine	514	\$229.64	\$118,034.96
Total			\$1,294,866.09

Table from ADGF (Llyod & Rossi, 2010)

CONCLUSIONS

- Trapping is still a very important Wildlife Management tool in Interior Alaska and the rest of the state
- Ways to have youth more involved in trapping
 - introduce them at a young age
 - program to teach furbearer trapping, in a concept that will reach the youth
- participating in trapping is still an option for local subsistence revenue

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